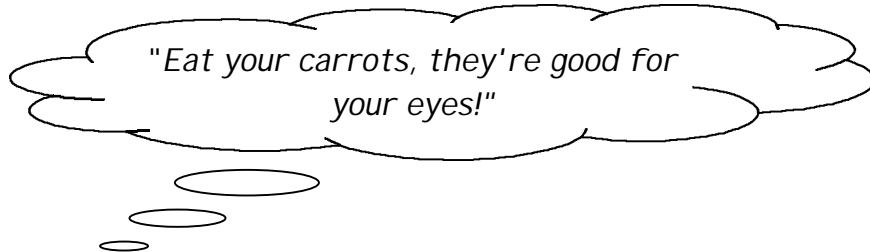


Vitamin A



Why do we need Vitamin A?

- ♦ important in vision, helps prevent "night blindness" (difficulty seeing at night)
- ♦ necessary for cell growth and maintenance of skin tissue
- ♦ is an *antioxidant* (substance that may help the body fight diseases such as cancer and heart disease)

How can we get enough Vitamin A in our diets?

Good sources of vitamin A in the diet include fruits and vegetables, especially those that are deep orange or dark green in color. Carrots, spinach, cantaloupe are all excellent sources. Vitamin A can also be found in dairy products, liver and egg yolks. See the chart below for good sources of vitamin A.

Most healthy adults need between 800-1000 ug RE* vitamin A per day	
1 medium baked sweet potato	2488
1 medium raw carrot	2025
1 cup cantaloupe pieces	516
2 scrambled eggs	238
1/2 cup cooked broccoli	174
8 ounces lowfat milk	145
1 cup canned peaches in juice	95

**ug RE = microgram retinol equivalents, a measure of vitamin A activity*

What about Vitamin A supplements?

Since vitamin A helps to maintain skin, doctors often use it to treat acne and other skin conditions. Watch out, though! Excess amounts of a kind of vitamin A known as *beta-carotene* can turn your skin orange! High doses of vitamin A can even be *toxic*. That's because vitamin A is a *fat-soluble vitamin* and we don't tend to get rid of it in the urine like we do with some *water-soluble vitamins*. Instead, the extra gets stored in our liver or body fat. Before you take extra vitamin A, either by putting it on your skin or taking a pill, ask your doctor. He or she can help you determine the benefits of vitamin A for *you*.

Words to know

- ◆ water-soluble vitamin - vitamin that dissolves in water: B vitamins, vitamin C
- ◆ fat-soluble vitamin - vitamin that does not dissolve in water: vitamins A, D, E and K.
- ◆ Antioxidants - substances that have been shown to help the body cells fight diseases such as cancer and heart disease
- ◆ beta-carotene - a form of vitamin A found in dark green or dark orange fruits and vegetables
- ◆ toxic - poisonous

Pump up your Vitamin A intake with this terrific recipe! ***Wrestler's Low-Fat Low-Cal Garden Veggie Soup***

Servings: approx. 6

<i>Amount</i>	<i>Measure</i>	<i>Ingredient</i>
2	medium	celery stalks, chopped
1	large	onion, chopped
2	medium	carrots, chopped
1	medium	white potato, diced
2	14 1/2 oz cans	chicken broth, fat-free/low sodium
1	14 1/2 oz can	green beans, drained
1	10 oz pkg.	Frozen spinach, thawed
1	14 1/2 oz can	stewed tomatoes, Italian style
1/8	cup	fresh parsley
1	tsp.	ground sage
2	envelopes	instant chicken broth, low sodium

Procedure

1. Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan and bring to a boil.
2. Reduce heat to low and simmer covered until vegetables are tender, 30 minutes
3. Serve with parmesan cheese, if desired.

Nutrient analysis per serving: Calories 100, carbohydrate 19g, Protein 7.5g, Fat 0.4g, Vitamin C 34.6mg, **Vitamin A 11,132 IU**, Calcium 127mg, Fiber 5.6 g; Food Guide Pyramid: 4 servings vegetable group.

Recipe submitted by Nick Poirier, student, Waterford High School, Waterford CT